



## Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

<b>Responsible Committee</b>	<b>Staffing Workgroup</b>
<b>Date reviewed</b>	<b>January 2025</b>
<b>Next Review date</b>	<b>January 2027</b>
<b>Signed on behalf of the Governing Body</b>	
<b>Print name</b>	

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This policy will be reviewed every three years as a minimum. The next review date is **October 2022**

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of the mental health lead and deputy.

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.

## 1.0 Policy statement

At Chambersbury, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture and ethos allows students' voices to be heard, and, through the use of effective policies and procedures, we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Chambersbury's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies including:

- ✚ The SEND policy
- ✚ The Safeguarding Policy
- ✚ The Equal Opportunities Policy
- ✚ The PSHE and RSE and Health Education Policies
- ✚ The Behaviour Policy

and

- ✚ Keeping Children Safe in Education
- ✚ Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing ( DfE, 2015)
- ✚ Hertfordshire Steps Training
- ✚ SEND Code of Practice (2015)

## 3.0 Policy Aims

- ✚ Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- ✚ Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- ✚ Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- ✚ Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- ✚ Provide the right support to students with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- ✚ Develop resilience amongst students and staff and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.

- ✚ Raise awareness that staff may have mental health issues, ensuring they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

## **4.0 Key staff members**

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- ✚ Designated Safeguarding Leads
- ✚ SENCO
- ✚ Mental Health Lead
- ✚ PSHE Lead

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of student, in the first instance they should speak to the Mental Health Lead.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

## **5.0 Individual Care Plans**

Social Emotional and Mental Health is one of the four broad areas of need in the SEN Code of Practice. When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, an Individual Care Plan may be drawn up. The school may also use a Personal Plan. The development of the plan will involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals

## **6.0 Teaching about mental health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. There are other opportunities to teach around these topics across the curriculum, in assemblies and through school and class events.

## **7.0 Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

The Mental Health Lead is responsible for signposting staff to relevant support as requested/necessary.

The School Family Worker is able to signpost parents to support outside of Education.

## **8.0 Sources of support at school and locally**

At Chambersbury we make sure that all children are fully supported to develop and maintain good mental health and wellbeing by providing support and teaching to all children, focused support for children needing additional provision and links to specialist support for children with significant mental health needs.

For the whole school to foster a mentally healthy environment we:

- ✚ Build good relationships within school and between school and home so all children and their families are supported and feel a sense of belonging
- ✚ Create and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands
- ✚ Follow the Herts Steps approach to behaviour management and de-escalation
- ✚ Follow a PSHE curriculum rooted in Protective Behaviours
- ✚ Use PSHE lessons and other opportunities to teach about mental health and wellbeing, using supporting strategies such as the Zones of Regulation.
- ✚ Help children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
- ✚ Promote self-esteem and efficacy so our children go on to become Changemakers.
- ✚ Support and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- ✚ Develop a culture where it is ok to talk about mental health
- ✚ Provide a range of opportunities for children and families to ask for help, including Worry Boxes in each classroom
- ✚ Promote pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- ✚ Celebrate academic and non-academic achievements in students and staff
- ✚ Provide opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others, including fundraising and awareness of wider issues in the world
- ✚ Provide opportunities for parents to meet with the School Family Worker for family support and signposting

### **For children needing some additional support we:**

- ✚ Identify need early through supportive conversations with children, parents and staff and assessments tools such as the SDQ and Roots and Fruits
- ✚ Develop care plans and personal plans and using strategies such as Social Stories
- ✚ Provide safe spaces in school and making reasonable adjustments in class and throughout the school day
- ✚ Use strategies from Herts Steps to make the school day easier and supporting staff to use Steps safely and effectively
- ✚ Adapt PSHE content, providing small group support
- ✚ Refer to the School Nursing Service
- ✚ Refer to the School Family Worker Service for individual or family support

### **For children needing intensive support we:**

- ✚ Work closely with specialist services, including making referrals
- ✚ Act promptly with due consideration for safeguarding
- ✚ Ensure staff receive appropriate training
- ✚ Develop individual plans and curricula
- ✚ Support staff following crisis management, disclosure or traumatic events

School support is co-ordinated by the SENCo in discussion with class teachers, support staff, children and parents.

### **Local Support**

We work with a number of external agencies to support emotional and mental health including:

- ✚ Dacorum Education Support Centre
- ✚ The School Nurses
- ✚ CAMHs
- ✚ Safe Space Counselling
- ✚ Family Worker Service

## 9.0 Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should alert the trained Mental Health Lead.

### **Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:**

- ✚ Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- ✚ Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- ✚ Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- ✚ Changes in activity and mood
- ✚ Lowering of academic achievement
- ✚ Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- ✚ Abusing drugs or alcohol
- ✚ Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- ✚ Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- ✚ Secretive behaviour
- ✚ Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- ✚ Lateness to, or absence from school
- ✚ Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- ✚ An increase in lateness or absenteeism

## 10.0 Targeted support

We recognise that some children are at greater risk of experiencing poor mental health and ensure all children and families who would benefit from targeted support receive it by:

- ✚ Providing specific help for those children most at risk or showing early signs of social, emotional, and behavioural problems
- ✚ Working closely with Children’s Services, CAMHS, Virtual School and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral
- ✚ Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. Agreeing an Individual Care Plan as the first stage of a ‘stepped care’ approach
- ✚ Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective
- ✚ Providing students and families with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of school policies and ethos and protocols regarding safeguarding and confidentiality
- ✚ Providing young people with opportunities to build relationships

✚ Carrying out all other duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

## **11.0 Managing disclosures**

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgmental. The school safeguarding policy will be followed. Staff will remember that safeguarding is our most important priority. Confidentiality of students and staff will be respected within the remits of safeguarding practice. Parents must always be informed, unless prohibited by safeguarding practice.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. Sharing disclosures with an appropriate colleague ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care.

## **12.0 Whole school approach**

### **12.1 Supporting parents**

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- ✚ Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to resources promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems
- ✚ Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.)
- ✚ Working with agencies supporting families

## 12.2 Supporting staff

The school will:

- ✚ Provide a working environment which enables staff to work and in which staff wellbeing is supported to enable staff to carry out their duties effectively
- ✚ Encourage staff as individuals to accept responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing
- ✚ Comply with all statutory requirements
- ✚ Develop an open culture in which mental, physical and emotional wellbeing is taken seriously and in which staff are supported in order that they may seek any help and support they need.
- ✚ Identify the hazards that could lead to poor staff health and wellbeing and reduce these where possible.
- ✚ Ensure the policy is monitored, evaluated and reviewed in the light of changing needs and legislative framework
- ✚ Foster a supportive work environment, with leadership operating in a fair and consistent manner.
- ✚ Promote a healthy workplace and practices that ensure that members of staff are able to develop a healthy mind.
- ✚ Pay attention to any indication of changes in performance or behaviour in staff and promote sympathetic alertness to staff who show signs of being under stress.
- ✚ Understand the differing needs of staff, at different points during their life cycles, and offer support accordingly, as required. This may include support for pregnant women, older women during the menopause, and those with caring responsibilities.
- ✚ Follow agreed procedures when there are concerns or absence due to work related stress and other mental-health problems and establish a supportive return-to-work policy
- ✚ Carry out timely risk assessments where necessary
- ✚ Demonstrate commitment, via clearly communicated practices to employees maintaining a good work/life balance
- ✚ Manage pressures which may affect staff, including the impact of workload pressures, and anticipate likely problems, taking action to reduce the effects of these pressures where possible.

### **Staff should:**

- ✚ Seek support or help when they think they are experiencing a problem, if possible, to a clearly identified line manager or named individual
- ✚ Work with the school and other professionals in an appropriate way within the dynamic to maintain good mental health and address manage any needs that may arise
- ✚ Act in a manner that respects the health and safety needs of themselves and others whilst in the workplace
- ✚ Consider attending training on health and wellbeing issues where they feel that this is appropriate
- ✚ Where possible, be watchful for any indication of changes of behaviour in colleagues and promote sympathetic alertness to colleagues who show signs of stress.

## **13.0 Training**

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep students safe.

A nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health Lead training or equivalent.

All staff are trained in Hertfordshire STEPS practice and Tier 1 Mental Health Awareness. Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate.